

Message Text

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12
ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 IO-13 CIAE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07

L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 OMB-01

SSO-00 SAM-01 /079 W
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P R 190632Z JUL 76
FM AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 8702
INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN
USINT BAGHDAD
AMEMBASSY BEIRUT
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI
USMISSION USUN
USIA WASHDC
DIA WASHDC

UNCLAS DAMASCUS 4696

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PFGUD SYJKK LE
SUBJECT: JULY 18 SYRIAN MEDIA STRESS CALM IN RASHAYYA

1. JULY 18 SYRIAN MEDIA STRESSED PREVAILING CALM IN RASHAYYA AL-WADI BUT CONTINUED DETERIORATION IN OTHER PARTS OF LEBANON. PRESS CAPTIONED: "AL-BAATH TRANSMITS FROM RASHAYYA LIVING PICTURES OF CALMNESS AND STABILITY. INHABITANTS CLAIM -- 'WE STOOD AGAINST FIGHTING AND DID NOT YIELD TO PRESSURES AND TERRORISM. WE SUPPORT SYRIAN INITIATIVE WITH ALL OUR MIGHT.' CONTINUATION OF DETERIORATION OF SITUATION IN LEBANON. WASHINGTON URGES AMERICANS TO LEAVE BEIRUT. CONTINUATION OF CONSULTATIONS TO IMPLEMENT AL RESOLUTIONS. RIAD CONTINUES HIS CONTACTS TO COPE WITH LEBANESE CRISIS. PARTIES TO UNCLASSIFIED

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PLOT STEP UP FIGHTING TO DRIVE AL MEDIATION FAILURE."
AL-THAWRAH REPORT ON RASHAYAA CAPTIONED: "AL-THAWRAH CONTINUES ITS TOUR OF LEBANON. RASHAYYA LIVES UNDER SHADE OF TOTAL TRANQUILLITY. CITIZENS' REMARKS REFLECT FEELINGS

OF RELIEF AND REASSURANCE OF SYRIAN PRESENCE."

2. AL-THAWRAH CORRESPONDENT INTERVIEWED MAJ. IBRAHIM SHAHIN, IDENTIFIED AS FORMER SUPPORTER OF LT. AHMAD AL-KHATIB AND PRESENTLY MEMBER OF SYRIAN-SUPPORTED LEBANESE ARMY VANGUARDS. SHAHIN STATED HE HAD BELIEVED IN LAA PRINCIPLES UNTIL HE DISCOVERED THAT ITS LEADERS BEGAN DEVIATING FROM THEIR PROFESSED MISSION.

3. MEDIA MAINTAINED STEADY DRUMBEAT OF CRITICISM AGAINST FATAH AND JUMBLATT. AL-BAATH CAPTIONED ARTICLE, "PLOT BY FATAH AND JUNCX#OF ARAB NATION." ARTICLE ASSERTED THAT AS CONSEQUENCE OF REIGN OF TERROR CONDUCTED BY FATAH/JUMBLATT GANGS AGAINST CITIZENS OF MARJAYOUN DISTRICT, INHABITANTS HAVE APPEALED TO SYRIAN FORCES TO LIBERATE VILLAGES FROM TERRORISM AND RESTORE LOCAL ORDER.

4. PROGRESSIVE NATIONAL FRONT (PNF) DAMASCUS BRANCH HELD MEETING EVENING JUNE 17 TO REVIEW LEBANESE SITUATION, PARTICULARLY "NOISY AND MISLEADING CAMPAIGNS LAUNCHED BY SOME PALESTINIAN ELEMENTS AND SOME WHO CLAIM THEY SUPPORTERS OF LEFT IN LEBANON AGAINST SYRIA. COMMAND OF PNF BRANCH CALLED UPON ALL PARTIES IN LEBANON TO CEASE FIGHTING AND PERMIT ALL LEBANESE TO ENJOY PEACE WHICH NOW PREVAILING IN AREAS PACIFIED BY SYRIA.

5. AL-BAATH COLUMNIST STRESSED VIEW THAT SINCE QUA NON FOR SUCCESSFUL COMPROMISE AMONG WARRING FACTIONS MUST BE LAYING ASIDE ANY THOUGHT OF TACTICAL GAINS PRIOR TO PEACE CONFERENCE. HE CALLED FOR HALT IN DISTORTION OF SYRIAN POSITION AND CLAIMED THAT SYRIAN FORCES NOT EAGER TO SMASH REVOLUTIONARY FORCES BUT INSTEAD HOPING UPHOLD THEIR OBLIGATION TO SUSTAIN ARAB LIBERATION MOVEMENT, ESPECIALLY PALESTINIANS. HE CONCLUDED OMINOUSLY, "LET THEM ALL MAKE USE OF THE OPPORTUNITY BEFORE IT IS TOO LATE."
MURPHY
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NOTE BY OC/T: #AS RECEIVED.

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 30 AUG 1999
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: n/a
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 19 JUL 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: n/a
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 JAN 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976DAMASC04696
Document Source: ADS
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: n/a
Film Number: n/a
From: DAMASCUS
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t197607106/baaaauxz.tel
Line Count: 99
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: n/a
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: KelleyW0
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 26 MAY 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <26 MAY 2004 by chengls>; APPROVED <06 DEC 2004 by KelleyW0>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: n/a
TAGS: PFGUD SYJJK LE
To: STATE
INFO AMMAN
MULTIPLE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006